

Experience: *Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you.*
—Aldous Huxley, English author, 1894-1963

High school uses old computers to build curriculum

Story and photos by Alexander Kufel

With an eye toward technology and a helping hand to education, Army Corps of Engineers officials viewed first-hand Wednesday, May 17, the impacts their computer donations were making on area public schools. At Kaimuki High School, representatives from Honolulu Engineer District visited computer and electronics labs and classrooms and saw that the equipment provided in a federally administrated "computers to the schools" program took on a renewed life once it reached the high school and actually were used in several different ways.

"I'm delighted to see that equipment that was otherwise headed toward the scrap heap has been used so innovatively," said Deputy District Engineer Maj. David Goddard. "Donating these computers so they could be continued to be used was definitely the right thing to do."

"Our students work with donated equipment to learn the basics of computer repair," said computer teacher Johnathon Griffiths. "From there they acquire enough skill to build all of the computers that are used in A Plus Certification training and in the CISCO Networking Academy," he said. CISCO is a nationwide program designed to integrate technology, economics and environmental studies into the academic program while reflecting community needs.

Electronics teacher Harold Kogasoka, Kaimuki High's LAN-systems administrator, said that the opportunity for students to learn these kinds of computer skills while still in high school is quite unique and that they have been very proud of how well the students have done on the professional certification tests.

Student Kris Morimoto, a senior headed toward computer studies in college, said that the donated equipment provided her with "hands-on" experience working with computer hardware that she might otherwise not have had and that because of this she is interested in learning computer networking on a professional level.

Besides providing experience to the students, in some cases once the computers have been taken apart and put back together again, they see service in typing classes where students can learn the fundamentals of typing and word-processing without requir-

ing the latest technology and are even at work in the school's science labs. Kogasoka also said that whenever they have surplus machines, those computers are offered at no cost to students who otherwise would not be able to acquire one of their own.

"It's gratifying to see that since the federal program was expanded from only math and science to include whatever a school needs, public schools like Kaimuki High have been able to create new curriculums that directly prepare students for employment," said Honolulu Engineer District property disposal specialist Francis Tonaki. He said that in the past several years, the District has donated more than 40 computer sets that include processors, monitors, keyboards, and mice as well as printers and scanners that originally cost more than \$100,000.

Eligibility for receiving this equipment is open to public and private schools and community organizations that have received a identification number from the U. S. Department of Education. However, not every school is willing to accept older technology, and in some cases where the schools invested heavily in Apple Macintosh computers,



Senior Kris Morimoto and junior Chad Fujimoto at a workstation in the Kaimuki High School electronics lab.



Visitors tour the high school's CISCO Networking Academy classroom in the company of teacher Johnathon Griffiths while students work on computers they built themselves.

IBM-compatible equipment won't work with their existing systems. Schools that have been able to work with the items made available range from Hawaii to Guam. Recipients also include a Boy Scout Troop in Guam. Approval for all transfers of equipment comes from the Defense Information Systems Agency headquarters in Arlington, Va.